

the lowest student loan interest rate in 17 years, making college affordable for middle class and working families.

We have doubled the Pell grant twice of what it was when we were first elected, now making college more affordable for low-income students unable to qualify for student loans.

We have increased funding for Head Start. We have increased funding for special education. Even while balancing the budget, education was a top priority last year, including this year as well; in fact, with last year's balanced budget, the first balanced budget in 28 years.

We increase funding by 10 percent, a \$5.4 billion funding increase. I am proud of that. Lowest student loan rates in 17 years, doubled Pell Grants, low income students, increasing funds for Head Start and special education, and making education a funding priority.

I will say, though, I am disappointed. There are some initiatives that were passed by this House that the President did not support, so they are not going to happen. Education savings accounts to help families better afford additional cost and public education and better afford the opportunity to go to a private parochial school, unfortunately, the President vetoed that effort to help families better afford education for their children.

Unfortunately because of the President's opposition and because of opposition from Members of his own party, an effort to give tax deferred status to prepaid college tuition programs unfortunately failed after we passed it out of this House, helping make college more affordable.

In an effort to provide for school construction, bonding programs to help school districts in Chicago and the south suburbs and other growing areas add classrooms and fix the roof, unfortunately the legislation, \$1 billion initiative which passed this House as part of the 90-10 plan, unfortunately we were not successful because of the President's opposition.

But we have had a very important victory for local schools and a very important victory for education in the final days. I am glad to see that this Republican Congress and a Democratic President on the end of Pennsylvania Avenue can work together.

The President talked earlier this year about the need to reduce class size, the need to hire additional teachers to accomplish that goal. Many of us in this House, in a bipartisan way, agreed with him.

The question was how were we going to achieve that goal. Are we going to have this type of program micromanaged from a bureaucracy here in Washington, or are we going to give the resources to local school districts and local school boards and local school administrators and give them the flexibility how best to decide that type of priority.

I am proud to say that we have reached an agreement. It is my under-

standing the President and the Republican majority have reached an agreement to provide \$1.1 billion in funds to help schools, and decision making will be in the local districts how best to use those dollars. That is a big victory for education, a big victory for local education, local schools.

#### STRIVE TO MEET DEADLINES IN THE 106TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, today, we have seen quite a transformation of the nature of the debate. I think all of us remember the debate from yesterday, the day before. There was a great deal of anguish over how we would support education in this country. Would there be funds and assistance for school construction and modernization? Would there be money for teachers? Was this going to be Federal interference with local education?

This body was badly polarized for all of us that sat and listened to the exchanges, horribly polarized. It is amazing. Here we are today, and it appears that we are uniform in supporting teachers in the reduction of class size.

I think that it is important that, as we debate these issues, the Nation understands that sometimes the debate is rhetoric. Sometimes the debate is real. Probably even today, if one searched and scratched hard enough, one would find that code words are being used to illustrate differences that now we are more interested in glossing over.

But I think it is a victory for the American people, for our students that we are focusing on reducing class size. I trust this is an initiative that is not just one that is being promoted here in Washington, but in State capitals around the country and in the offices of local school districts around the country and in the homes of the citizens of this Nation as all of us join together to emphasize the importance of small class size and the best possible educational preparation for our children.

There is another aspect about the debate and the proceedings this week that I would like to touch upon, and that is the unseemly chaos that is accompanying the close of this 105th Congress.

Some have complained that the President has not been here every day and every hour and blame the President for the fact that these last days have been added to the session.

Others have pointed out, as I would like to emphasize, that we have not had a budget resolution to guide this body. The lack of a budget resolution certainly cannot be blamed on the White House. That budget resolution is a concurrent resolution adopted by the House and the Senate to guide this body in passing appropriations bills for the 1998, 1999 fiscal year.

I am sure that all of us are well aware that that fiscal year started October 1, 15 days ago. We are half a month into the fiscal year. We have no budget resolution. Indeed, we are 6 months past the due date for the budget resolution, April 15, 1998. We have no budget resolution.

Going further, this will go down as the first Congress in 24 years of having a budget requirement that has failed to produce a budget resolution. We do not have a concurrent budget resolution. I submit that this contributes to the frantic nature of the negotiations and the delay that we have experienced in this 105th Congress in bringing our efforts to a close.

I note with some concern that the same party controls this body and the Senate. I would have hoped that a budget resolution would have been enacted because of that leadership from the same political party. But unfortunately it has not.

I can certainly see situations where my side of the aisle might well have had parallel difficulties. But the lesson to be learned here is we need to work together to find some way, even within our own caucuses, to bring closure to divisive debates.

Certainly if we cannot within our own caucus and within our own party find a way to pass a budget resolution, how much more difficult is it in the body at large.

Mr. Speaker, I think that we should make a resolution as we leave this institution and returned to our respective districts, that in the 106th Congress, we will endeavor to do better and observe the deadlines that apply within the budget process, and hopefully we can then come up with an educational program earlier in the season and not have to have the debate delayed and become so divisive as it has here in the fall of 1998.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE LEGISLATION TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER SUSPENSION OF THE RULES ON FRIDAY OCTOBER 16, 1998

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 589, I hereby give notice that the following suspensions will be considered tomorrow, October 16, 1998:

H.R. 1197, Plant Patent Amendments Acts of 1997;

H.R. 1756, Money Laundering and Financial Crimes Strategy Act of 1998;

S. 610, Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act.

#### THE SURPLUS CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EWING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, it is the nature of politics that we never get everything we want. But when American people support the general direction in which we are going, small victories do become possible.